

NEBRASKA DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

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Dear Nebraska Educators:

Recently, the State Board of Education adopted “guidelines for reading instruction” in Nebraska schools based on the recently released reports from the National Reading Panel and U.S. Department of Education. In adopting the three documents as guidelines, we have a framework that can guide the implementation of Nebraska’s reading and writing standards.

- A policy guide: Teaching Children to Read; an Evidence-Based Assessment of the Scientific Research Literature on Reading and Its Implications for Reading Instruction (A summary of reading research.)
- A teacher’s guide: Put Reading First - The Research Building Blocks for Teaching Children To Read (Definitions, teaching approaches and examples of classroom instruction.)
- A parent’s guide: “Put Reading First - Helping Your Child Learn to Read” (What parents should see happening at school and how they can support their children in learning to read.)

The National Reading Panel (NRP) selected several topics of reading instruction for review of the studies and research base supporting them. The NRP did not review all topics related to reading nor did they examine all the studies. The documents present the findings of the NRP noting which findings are research-proven, which are research-based and which ones are neither.

Therefore, the documents provide guidelines for us to use in our schools, in our teacher training and development programs, and in our families and homes. We believe the guidelines compliment our Nebraska reading and writing standards. While the primary focus of the guidelines are K-3, they do include guidelines supporting language and literacy development in the years before school.

We are forwarding this information to you in hopes that you will do the following:

- Disseminate the documents to your faculty and principals who are responsible for grades K-3

State Board of Education

Fred Meyer President District 6 1580 Highway 281 St. Paul, NE 68873	Bev Peterson Vice President District 3 108 South Park Avenue Omaha, NE 68045	Kimberly J. Peterson District 1 1521 SW 14th Street Lincoln, NE 68522	Ann Mactier District 2 3811 North Post Road Omaha, NE 68112	Rachel Bone District 4 7346 South 76th Avenue LaVista, NE 68128	Patricia H. Timm District 5 1020 N. 21st Street Beatrice, NE 68310	Kandy Imes District 7 1850 20th Street Gering, NE 69341	Joe Higgins District 8 5067 S. 107th Street Omaha, NE 68127
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- Disseminate the documents to parents
- Disseminate the documents to early childhood programs in your district or region.
- Implement processes for reviewing what and how reading is taught aligning practices with the findings.
- Engage teachers in designing professional development programs that will meet their needs in developing the knowledge, skills and dispositions to ensure all students learn to read.
- Engage your Educational Service Unit and/or teacher education institutions in determining ways to support professional development for faculty and principals.
- Contact the Department of Education if we can provide resources, support and/or expertise that will assist you.

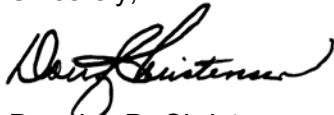
The Department of Education will be using the guidelines to:

- Implement statewide professional development programs delivered regionally through a trainer-of-trainers model.
- Align teacher education program approval, endorsement rules and certification rules with the guidelines.
- Use guidelines for the granting of literacy funds to local schools.

We hope you find these guidelines helpful and will incorporate them into your curriculum plans and instructional strategies. We do not presume that these guidelines represent all of what reading and writing instruction should include. However, we do believe the reports represent a foundation upon which educators, policymakers, the public and parents can agree. These materials can also be accessed on the Web at <http://www.ed.gov/offices/OESE/readingfirst/publications.html>, or additional hard copies can be ordered free of charge from the U.S. Department of Education by calling 1-877-433-7827, ordering on-line at <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/edpubs.html>, or e-mailing the Education Publications Center at edpubs@inet.ed.gov.

Please contact Kim Larson, Reading/Writing Director, at 402-471-4336, if you have questions or need assistance.

Sincerely,



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Commissioner of Education